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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE,

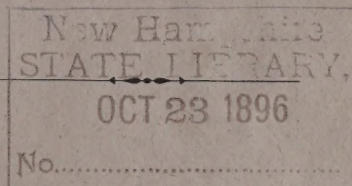
OF THE

TOWN OF WALPOLE;

WITH THE

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT,

1856-57.



BELLOWS FALLS:  
PRINTED AT THE PHENIX JOB OFFICE.  
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# REPORT

OF THE

## SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

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TO THE TOWN OF WALPOLE:—

Your Committee having closed their labors for the past year, would offer the following Report of the Schools:

At the annual meeting in March, 1856, the town voted to raise for schools, \$2,122. The interest on the Kilburn note was \$34 65; on Fox legacy, \$60 00; received from the State, \$143 08; making the whole amount applied to schools, \$2,359 73.

The whole number of scholars in town was 584.

### SUMMER SCHOOLS.

Schools were kept in all the districts, except No. 7.

No. 2 was taught eight weeks by Miss TENNEY. This is a small school, and consists mostly of children from Irish families, who manifest a disposition and readiness to learn; and Miss Tenney seems to have devoted herself faithfully and successfully to their improvement.

No. 3. Miss Osgood, teacher. The scholars, though most of them small, appeared well at the closing examination, and gave indications of good improvement.

No. 4 was taught by Miss PERKINS,—an efficient teacher. The scholars made that improvement which is always seen when the teacher is faithful and the pupils punctual and studious.

No. 5 was taught by Miss KINGSBURY,—same teacher as the previous summer, and who continued the same care and effort for the welfare of the school which had induced the district to employ her a second time.

No. 6 was under the instruction of Miss E. A. HALL, who has successfully taught several of our schools during the past few years. Her school appeared well, and in reading and recitations the classes were marked "good."

No. 8. Teacher, Miss SCOVELL. Some of the scholars in this school did very well; but it was evident that some of the larger ones were not interested, and did not co-operate with the teacher. The school was not as successful as we could have wished, though we think the teacher did all in her power to make it so.

No. 9 was taught by Miss MARCH,—a faithful teacher. The scholars, though small, made good improvement in their studies and deportment.

No. 10 was visited only at its commencement. Miss BURGESS, the teacher, is a good scholar; but not having taught before, she did not appear so familiar and expert as might be in managing the school. We cannot speak of the results of her efforts.

No. 11. Miss BRIGHAM, the teacher, seemed faithful, and the scholars did well.

No. 12. Miss KNIGHT, teacher. This school was well disciplined and well taught. The scholars, though not as far advanced as some of our schools, seemed interested, and made good improvement.

No. 13. This school was creditable to both teacher and scholars—quiet, orderly and diligent—and the pupils made good progress in their studies.



No. 14. This school was well taught by Miss BENSON. There was constant interest on the part of both teacher and scholars. Attendance was good and improvement evident.

### WINTER SCHOOLS.

No. 2 was taught by Mr. HORTON, who seemed deficient in energy and good government,—became weary of his work, and left at the end of six weeks.

The school is to be continued under Miss ALBEE, who used to do well.

No. 3 was under the care of Mr. THOMAS HILAND,—a faithful and efficient teacher. A very successful school, in all respects.

No. 4. Mr. RICHARDSON, teacher. The school showed much interest on the part of both teacher and pupils. There was decided progress in the school as a whole, although some of the classes which made an excellent show when reciting in a body, did not prove themselves thoroughly acquainted with their studies when examined individually. The interest which the parents of this district take in the schools is highly commendable, and a worthy example to the other districts in town. It is hearty and constant.

No. 5. We thought the deportment of the scholars in this district maintained the improvement for which credit was given them a year ago. They made evident improvement in their studies, and deserve to be well spoken of. Mr. PIKE, the Master, is a respectable teacher, failing somewhat, however, in force and thoroughness.

No. 6 was taught by Miss E. A. HALL with her accustomed faithfulness and success. Some members of the district intimated to the committee a wish for a teacher of higher qualifications. The matter belonged to the prudential committee, and we did not think it proper for us to interfere, as Miss Hall had repeatedly approved herself in the

employment. But it may, perhaps, be of use to say here that we thought it would have been better to have sought such a teacher as was desired. No. 6 has been one of our best schools. In it we have found some of our best scholars, and let it seek teachers of the first class.

No. 7 was taught for the fifth time by Miss EMERSON, one of our most successful teachers. Both teacher and scholars seemed to have labored unremittingly for sixteen weeks. The parents and prudential committee also take a deep interest in the school, as the number of visits will show. The improvement was such as might have been expected from such efforts. Some of the finest specimens of map-drawing were exhibited that we have seen in any school. The school-house needs remodeling and repairing.

No. 8 was a successful school, taught by Mr. R. H. MASON. The teacher was faithful and efficient. The manner in which the scholars read and recited, together with their good deportment, indicated a marked improvement during the term. A new school-house is needed in this district.

No. 9 was successfully taught by Mr. S. J. MARTIN. The school seemed rather dull, and scholars not so much interested in their studies as in some of our schools; yet we think they made commendable progress.

No. 10. By mistake the notice of the closing of the school did not reach the visitor, and he saw it but once. It was a large school, and one that would try the energy and skill of any teacher. We were much pleased with the appearance and management of Mr. PRATT at its commencement, and thought he would succeed, but cannot say how far he did so.

No. 11 was taught by Miss RUST,—an efficient teacher. The school though very small appeared well.

No. 12 was a very successful school. Mr. ALLEN, the teacher, seemed to succeed in bringing the school under



very excellent discipline without losing the love and respect of his pupils. The scholars made good improvement, although too irregular in their attendance.

No. 13. In this school, though not perfect, there was much to commend. Scholars generally disposed to behave well and to learn, and a teacher disposed to encourage and assist them. It of course made fair progress.

No. 14. Same teacher as in summer, with like success.

### GENERAL REMARKS.

We are happy to say that there have been but few of those jars and disturbances in our schools the past year, which so often create unpleasant feelings, and hinder all improvement. But one teacher has failed, and in no instance has the committee been called to settle difficulties.

As a whole, we think there has been some advancement over past years. In some schools, a decided progress;—in others there has been motion, without much advance.

With a few exceptions, we have had better qualified teachers than in some previous years. Teachers generally seem to be aiming at a higher standard.

There has also been improvement in the deportment of scholars: They have manifested more of a desire to do well—more self-control and self-application.

The first thing in order to have good schools is to secure good teachers, such as are not only thoroughly qualified in all the branches required to be taught, but who also have ability to impart instruction, and to discipline and interest their pupils. Their habits and manners also should be such that their entire influence in school will be salutary.

The great responsibility of selecting such teachers lies with the prudential committee. The superintending committee have no election. Their only choice is to accept or reject those that are offered. These are often presented under such circumstances that the rejection of a poorly quali-

fied teacher seems a greater evil than an indifferent school, so that really our choice often is only between two evils. Sometimes we are called upon to examine teachers who have been in their schools for weeks. This is entirely wrong. The law plainly specifies that no teacher shall be employed without a certificate from the superintending committee, and it makes it the duty of the prudential committee to see that they have such certificate.

Besides this difficulty, there are some teachers who are so well qualified in all the branches in which we are required to examine them, that we feel under obligation to approve them, while at the same time we may be convinced that they will not meet the wants of the district where they are to teach. A teacher in order to be respected and successful, must be prepared to teach all the scholars in the district in all proper branches. The question, then, in employing a teacher should not be,—Can he teach the branches required by law? nor, Can he get a certificate? but, Will he meet the wants of our district? Is he the best one for us?

In many of our schools there should be more interest manifested by parents and citizens. The experience of the past year has shown that where there was the most of the spirit of progress in the whole district, and all were alive to the best interests of the school, there has been the best success. This influence operates on committees, leading them to greater efforts to secure proper teachers. It helps teachers, and stimulates scholars. But if parents are indifferent, there will be indifference, if nothing worse, in the school-room. The school is to a great extent the thermometer which indicates the state of things in the district. A superior teacher may operate like heat applied directly to the mercury, causing it to rise for a time, but it is very difficult to keep it long above the surrounding atmosphere.

The number of visits of citizens has been much less than during the previous year. Then we reported 1335. This year, only 861.

Another, and perhaps the greatest fault of our schools the past year has been irregularity of attendance. The average number of days absence to each scholar attending school (District No. 1 not included) has been 15; so that if all the scholars had attended constantly, the length of all our schools might have been diminished fifteen days, and the attendance have been as much as it has been. This would have been a saving of \$200 to the town. Besides, the real loss is far greater than this. No scholar can make as much improvement by attending school 40 days out of 60, as by attending 40 days constantly. It is impossible to remedy this evil entirely, yet we think after making all due allowance for sickness and snow-drifts, there might be much improvement. This matter belongs principally to the parents.

Most of our school-houses are in pretty good condition. One has been repaired during the year. There are one or two others whose days we think are numbered and nearly finished. At least, we saw the hand-writing on the wall. The condition of the school-room has much to do with the condition of the school.

We would caution teachers against introducing too many new text-books, and thus multiplying classes unnecessarily. To making many school-books there is no end. All teachers will have their preferences; but they cannot use all the good ones. So let them sacrifice their preferences for the good of the school.

Some of our teachers are inclined, as we think, to carry to excess what they term declamations and compositions. We would not say one word in disparagement of these highly important exercises, but think they should be kept within such limits as not to make them painful to all concerned.

In conclusion we would say that the experience of the past year has increased our confidence in our system of Common Schools. This is the only democratic system of education, and we hope it will be more deeply cherished in



the warm affections of every true citizen, and more and more fostered by the money and influence of the Town. It is yet embarrassed with many imperfections. Our schools are not doing what they might—what they ought—nor what we believe they will; for we think we see many indications of progress. Our course is onward. Sometimes tardy, to be sure. There are many delays; yet we have passed some points, that, a few years ago, lay a long distance before us. And when through the united exertions of the Town and the Districts—the Teachers and Pupils—Parents and Committees, our schools have reached that position we can now see in prospect, they will amply repay every effort, with their influence upon the stability of our institutions, and the general welfare and prosperity of the people.

J. M. STOW.  
THOMAS BELLOWS.  
F. N. KNAPP.

TABLE I.

## SUMMER SCHOOLS.

DISTRICTS,	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Length of School, in weeks.	8	11	12	11	12		12	12	12	8	14	10	15
Wages of female Teacher, per month, including board.	\$12	\$14	\$14	\$13.33	\$13.33		\$13	\$11	\$14	\$12	\$18	\$11	\$7
Number of Scholars of 4 years and upwards.	21	27	25	17	12		12	18	31	9	35	16	17
Average attendance.	18½	21	23	16	11		11	16½	22½	8½	26	14	16
Number of absences.	88	360	132	60	66		66	95	561	30	593	110	82
Number of tardinesses.	114	33	40	3	9		47	3	83	10	35	18	13
Number not absent.	1	1	2	3	0		0	3	1	1	1	1	3
Number not tardy.	-	15	2	14	9		3	16	6	5	21	7	10
Number not absent or tardy.	-	1	1	3	0		0	3	1	0	1	0	1
Number between 4 and 16 years.	19	26	25	17	12		12	18	31	8	35	16	17
Number over 16.	2	1	0	0	0		0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Number of visits of Superintending Committee.	1	2	2	2	2		2	2	1	2	2	2	2
Number of visits of Prudential Committee.	0	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	0	0	2	1
Number of visits of Citizens and officers.	9	23	40	34	25		41	54	15	6	0	40	25

TABLE II.

## WINTER SCHOOLS.

Districts.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Length of School, in weeks.	6	12	12 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	14	16	12	12	12	12	14	13	16
Wages of male Teacher, per month.	\$26	\$33	\$36	\$33	\$20	\$19.60	\$27	\$25	\$36	\$22	\$37	\$26	\$14.50
Wages of female Teacher, per month.	-	-	-	-	-	10	24	23	43	11	40	20	17
Number of Scholars of 4 years and upwards.	19	33	26	23	16	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	21	21	34 $\frac{1}{2}$	9	31 $\frac{1}{2}$	17	14
Average attendance.	15	26	22 $\frac{3}{4}$	22	13 $\frac{3}{4}$	132	198	125	573	132	654	213	254
Number of absences.	132	462	224	66	192	3	80	58	128	14	143	36	9
Number of tardinesses.	-	-	-	-	13	3	3	6	0	0	0	0	0
Number not absent.	71	57	40	26	13	4	1	7	0	0	7	10	11
Number not tardy.	2	14	8	9	9	9	7	8	5	6	3	3	11
Number not absent or tardy.	0	0	2	0	1	3	1	3	0	0	0	1	0
Number between 4 and 16 years.	18	27	24	17	15	8	18	19	40	10	35	15	17
Number over 16 years.	0	6	2	6	1	2	5	4	3	1	5	5	0
Number of visits of Superintending Committee.	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	2
Number of visits of Prudential Committee.	0	1	3	3	2	12	2	2	3	0	0	0	2
Number of visits of Citizens.	0	31	106	25	33	85	23	59	33	13	24	15	26



# REPORT

OF THE

## SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF DISTRICT NO. 1.

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### PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

This school for the past year has been under the care of Miss Stow, a faithful teacher. The deportment of the scholars during term time, and their appearance at the several examinations, have indicated interest on the part of the pupils, and ability on the part of the teacher.

Considering the age of the children, the attendance at this school has been, perhaps, as good as we could expect; but we urge upon the parents the great importance of forming in their children, even the youngest, *habits* of regular attendance and punctuality at school.

### INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL.

MISS MARY A. REED taught this school the first and second terms. Had she been as successful in all respects as she was in most, she would probably have continued through the year. But it was thought best to employ a man to teach the school during the winter term. Mr. ABBOTT was engaged. He has been efficient and faithful. The examination of his school was good.

### HIGH SCHOOL.

This school during the past year has been taught by Mr. FRANCIS B. KNAPP. He has labored with constant assiduity, and faithfully. The several examinations of the school

have been satisfactory, and indicated marked improvement in a majority of the scholars. The number of branches taught, and consequently the labor performed, has been much greater than would be indicated by the number of scholars.

The teacher has endeavored to carry out the original plan of *classifying* the scholars. In order to do this, some scholars have had more, others fewer, studies than would otherwise have been assigned them. But the Committee are confident that a rigid system of classification, as recommended in the last year's Report, is the only true system.

Part of the recommendations contained in the Report of last year we would again present as necessary to be adopted and enforced by the Committee who shall have charge of the school the next year: "That no person who belongs, or shall be admitted to the school, be allowed to pursue the more advanced studies, without first having passed a satisfactory examination in those previously prescribed in the regular course, unless by special vote of the Committee."

In this school some of the scholars left shortly before the end of the last term; and some, too, who were still members of the school, absented themselves from the public examination at the close. These things are an injustice both to the teacher and to the school. We would therefore urge upon parents the importance of securing the regular, punctual, and continued attendance of their children.

We must not omit to notice the interest shown by Mr. B. B. WILLIS in the schools of this district. In order to encourage the scholars he offered to give four prizes to each one of the three schools, to be assigned to those scholars who were distinguished for Industry, Punctuality, and Good Deportment. These prizes were distributed at the end of the second term. They consisted of fourteen valuable and beautiful volumes. The inducement thus held out to the scholars has had its desired effect. Mr. Willis has offered

a similar set of prizes for distribution at the end of the next school year.

We would close our report with calling the attention of parents and friends to the real good they may do by frequently visiting the school rooms, and thus expressing the interest which we hope all feel.

JESSENAH KITTRIDGE.

J. M. STOW.

F. N. KNAPP.



TABLE III.  
DISTRICT NO. 1.

	SPRING TERM.			FALL TERM.			WINTER TERM.		
	Primary Department.	Intermediate Department.	High School.	Primary Department.	Intermediate Department.	High School.	Primary Department.	Intermediate Department.	High School.
Length of school, in weeks. . . .	12	12	12	12	13	13	11½	11½	13
Whole number of Scholars. . . .	41	40	28	49	38	26	43	41	31
Number between 4 and 16 years. .	41	40	26	49	38	24	43	39	27
Number over 16. . . . .	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	3	4
Average attendance. . . . .	30	33	26	37½	30	23	29	33	20½
Number of absences. . . . .	323	257	30	338	256	45	412	55	115
Number of tardinesses. . . . .	85	112	12	101	116	25	72	108	15
Number not absent. . . . .	3	9	6	5	9	9	1	9	1
Number not tardy. . . . .	22	18	13	20	24	10	19	14	4
Number not absent or tardy. . . .	3	4	6	4	06	8	1	7	0
Wages of Teacher, per month. . .	\$19 00	\$25 50	\$52 00	\$19 00	\$25 50	\$52 00	\$22 00	\$38 00	\$52 00
Visits of Superintending Committee.	1	10	12	3	8	8	2	7	8
Visits of Prudential Committee. .	0	3	3	0	0	3	0	0	3
Visits of Citizens. . . . .	8	16	30	3	21	30	6	16	50



